

March 24, 1999

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SIKHS WILL CELEBRATE 300TH ANNIVERSARY—AMERICA SHOULD SUPPORT SIKH FREEDOM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, this April marks a very significant occasion, the 300th anniversary of the Sikh Nation. The occasion will be celebrated with a big march in Washington, with prayers, and in many other ways. Let us join with the Sikhs on this auspicious occasion and pray that they will soon enjoy the same freedom in their homeland, Punjab, Khalistan, that we enjoy here in America.

I would like to congratulate the Sikh Nation on this major milestone, which was brought to my attention by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. Many of us have been made aware of the brutal oppression of the Sikhs by the Indian government due to Dr. Aulakh's tireless efforts. I am pleased to note that Dr. Aulakh's office is organizing the march.

There are half of a million Sikhs in the United States. They have added to the richness of American life in many aspects of life and work. They have been productive, proud, law-abiding Americans. The Sikhs came to this country to enjoy the freedom that has made America the great country that it is. On this very special occasion for the Sikh Nation, let us honor those fine Americans by taking steps to help their Sikh brothers and sisters in Punjab, Khalistan enjoy the same freedom. That is the best way to prevent another Bosnia or Kosovo in South Asia.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, there is no freedom for Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, Dalits, or other minorities in India today. The Indian government continues to practice a brutal oppression that has taken tens of thousands of Sikh, Christian, Muslim, and other human lives. Yet this brutal country continues to be among the top five recipients of U.S. aid.

Why are we using tax dollars to support this repressive government? Even with our budget surplus, this is a bad use of taxpayers' money. We should cut off this aid and declare our support for self-determination in the Indian subcontinent. The Sikhs of Khalistan, the Muslims of Kashmir, the Christians of Nagaland, and others seek only to decide their futures in the democratic way, by voting. As the beacon of freedom in the world, it is our moral duty to support this struggle for freedom. Let us take the occasion of the Sikh Nation's 300th anniversary to commit ourselves to full support for freedom for all people, starting with these few simple measures.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO BESSIE BAUGHN

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 1999

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bessie Baughn, an exceptional citizen of San Mateo County, California, who will be inducted into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame on Friday, March 26, 1999.

Bessie Baughn's motto is: "If there's a need, I fill it." This explains the amazing list of boards and organizations which Bessie currently is an integral part of. She has been named the Volunteer of the Year twice, the Woman of Distinction, and the Woman of the Year.

Several of Bessie Baughn's achievements include founding the San Bruno Volunteer Services and Operation Video which provides videos to the residents of nursing homes. Bessie not only puts in time and energy, but also her own resources to help start and sustain these important programs and services. Bessie Baughn not only practices volunteerism, she preaches it as well. She writes a weekly column in the Independent where she encourages community work and volunteerism.

Mr. Speaker, Bessie Baughn is an outstanding woman and I salute her for her remarkable contributions and commitment to our community. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring her on being inducted into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame.

INTRODUCING THE FAIR PAY ACT OF 1999

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Senator TOM HARKIN and I are introducing the Fair Pay Act of 1999, a bill that would require employers to pay equal wages to women and men performing comparable jobs in an effort to remedy the pay inequities that women continue to endure. We introduce this bill simultaneously in both Houses as an indication of the preeminent importance many American families attach to equal pay today.

At 76 percent of a men's wage, women's wages and the wage gap remain totally unacceptable. The continuing disparity is especially untenable considering that a significant part of the narrowing of the gap since 1963 is because of a decline in men's wages over the decades. The Equal Pay Act (EPA) was passed in 1963, and by focusing on pay disparities where men and women were doing the same (or similar) jobs, has helped narrow the wage gap between men and women. The Fair Pay Act takes the Equal Pay Act an important step further and seeks to confront the pay disparity problem of the 1990's the way the EPA confronted the equal pay problem in the 1960's.

Why has equal pay, once considered a women's issue, gone to the top of the polls for American families today? American families

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are becoming deeply dependent on women's wages today. Even in two-parent families, 66% of the women work, and the number of female-headed households has more than doubled since 1970.

Although most American families today must rely heavily on women's wages, women continue to earn less than their male counterparts with comparable qualifications and duties. Women complete more schooling than men but still have not caught up with men in earnings. Much of what progress has been made can be traced to the earnings of a small group of professional or highly skilled women. The average woman—the woman who works in a historically underpaid traditionally female occupation—has seen little progress. Over her lifetime, a woman loses over \$420,000 because of pay inequity, and collectively, women and their families lose more than \$100 billion in wages each year because of wage discrimination.

The FPA recognizes that if men and women are doing comparable work, they should be paid a comparable wage. If a woman is an emergency services operator, a female-dominated profession, for example, she should be paid no less than a fire dispatcher, a male-dominated profession, simply because each of these jobs has been dominated by one sex. If a woman is a social worker, a traditionally female occupation, she should earn no less than a probation officer, a traditionally male job, simply because of the gender associated with each of these jobs.

The FPA, like the EPA, will not tamper with the market system. As with the EPA, the burden will be on the plaintiff to prove discrimination. She must show that the reason for the disparity is sex or race discrimination, not legitimate market factors.

As women's employment has become an increasingly significant factor in the real dollar income of American families, fair pay between the sexes has escalated in importance. There are remaining Equal Pay Act problems in our society, but the greatest barrier to pay fairness for women and their families today is a line drawn in the workplace between men and women doing work of comparable value. I ask for your support of the Fair Pay Act to pay women what they are worth so that their families may get what they need and deserve.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. FAY MARTIN JOHNSTON

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 1999

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to a remarkable lady, Mrs. Fay Martin Johnston. Mrs. Johnston was one of my constituents from Forest, Mississippi. She passed away on February 27, 1999.

Mrs. Johnston was born in Edwards, Mississippi and was a resident of Forest since 1941. Mrs. Johnston was the wife of the late Eric E. Johnston, Jr. He was the former editor and publisher of the Scott County Times newspaper, Mayor of Forest, and noted author of books related to Mississippi politics.